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**safe** *meat*

ANNUAL REPORT







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# Message from the Chair

Dear Stakeholder

I am pleased to present to you SAFEMEAT's Annual Report. This report describes SAFEMEAT's activities and performance for the 2019 – 2020 financial year.

The last year was difficult for many of us.

In summer we experienced the catastrophic 'Black Summer' bushfires, which tore through millions of hectares of regional Australian forest and farmland with devastating impacts on many red meat and livestock producers. Many of our SAFEMEAT members were involved in the immediate response and subsequent recovery efforts to support impacted producers manage their livestock and continue to meet the requirements of Australia's red meat integrity system.

Shortly after, we were hit by the unprecedented global COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, which has presented all our SAFEMEAT member organisations with significant challenges. Members have undertaken a huge shift in the way that they operate, engage with stakeholders, and deliver programs to support the red meat, pork and livestock industry. SAFEMEAT has supported members in their COVID-19 management efforts, providing a platform for industry and government to share updates and strategies for handling various challenges.

Like many other organisations, SAFEMEAT successfully transitioned to virtual meetings in 2020. Members adapted well to the new virtual format and continued to engage constructively on SAFEMEAT matters.

Despite these significant challenges, SAFEMEAT continued to support Australia's red meat, pork and livestock industry and successfully deliver on a number of priorities.

In March, we delivered SAFEMEAT's report '*Reform recommendations for Australia's livestock traceability system*'. The report identifies and urges immediate action to address deficiencies in Australia's livestock traceability system, to increase our biosecurity preparedness and offer a feasible pathway forward and recommendations to address these issues. Most importantly, it is a demonstration of an unprecedented level of national industry consensus on the need for reform.

Another significant body of work completed by SAFEMEAT in 2019-20 was the evaluation of the Victorian electronic identification (eID) traceability system for sheep at its current stage of rollout. The methodology, developed by SAFEMEAT's Jurisdictional Traceability Group, was finalised in late 2019, with the evaluation exercise being conducted in March 2020. The results of the evaluation provide convincing evidence to support SAFEMEAT's recommendations to enhance Australia's livestock traceability system. The final report, '*National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) (Sheep & Goats) Traceability Evaluation: A comparison and evaluation of traceability of electronic and visual identification in NLIS (Sheep & Goats) in a segment of the supply chain*' will be provided to SAFEMEAT for consideration in late 2020.

Additional key activities SAFEMEAT has undertaken or overseen during the year include:

- The SAFEMEAT Sheep Traceability Working Group's work with the Centre for International Economics (CIE) to update the 2010 NLIS Sheep & Goat Business Plan. The final report from CIE provides updated costs and benefits of improving the sheep and goat traceability system.
- Implementation of changes to the National Vendor Declaration (NVD). Change requests were received from several organisations and progressed in line with SAFEMEAT's annual NVD review process.
- Consideration of the results and recommendations of the Cowcatcher III tracing exercise in late 2019. The Cowcatcher III report has provided SAFEMEAT with a number of recommendations which will be considered as part of the broader review of traceability.
- The development of Hormone Growth Promotant (HGP) communications materials. The new materials will help to ensure consistency in the communications to producers, feedlot operators, livestock agents and others along the beef supply chain to maintain and strengthen HGP compliance.
- The review and complete redesign of SAFEMEAT's Incident Response Manual. The revised Incident Response Manual takes into consideration contemporary emergency management frameworks and the broader regulatory and policy environment that the incident response manual operates within.
- The design and launch of a new SAFEMEAT website. The new website provides a far more user-friendly experience and will assist SAFEMEAT's broader communication efforts.

The success of SAFEMEAT is thanks to the ongoing commitment and co-operation of its partner members. I would like to thank the SAFEMEAT Partnership and the member organisations for their continued commitment and contributions in 2019-20, and welcome new members to the group. I would also like to acknowledge the considerable efforts made throughout the year by our observer organisations, and the Secretariat. At times, SAFEMEAT's work is challenging, and we appreciate that participants share their opinions and insights in an environment of trust, goodwill, and common sense.

Our red meat, pork and livestock industry is crucial to State and Commonwealth economies alike and is poised to do much of the heavy lifting as we progress emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. SAFEMEAT remains an integral vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues across the red meat, pork and livestock industry in Australia. I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining the SAFEMEAT structure going forward.

This will be the last Annual Report that I present to you as Chair of the SAFEMEAT Partnership. I thank you all for giving me the opportunity to chair this important industry government partnership.

Yours sincerely



**Ross Keane**  
Chair  
SAFEMEAT Partnership





## Role of SAFEMEAT

SAFEMEAT is dedicated to promoting Australia's best practice management systems, rationalisation of regulation and standards within the industry, and driving the implementation of sound strategies and incident management principles, to ensure the integrity of Australian meat.

SAFEMEAT provides strategic input and advice on the meat safety systems that are in place throughout the production supply chain including on-farm assurance and through-chain traceability programs. SAFEMEAT works in partnership with industry and government members to provide a forum to develop unified policy, ensuring that there is a streamlined, integrated, and collaborative approach to the delivery of safe Australian meat.

In undertaking this role SAFEMEAT proactively monitors emerging meat safety issues that may impact on Australian meat and livestock products, guides research and development, and provides strategic input and advice to ensure that risks are mitigated, and market related opportunities for the Australian red meat, pork and livestock industry are maximised.

### **SAFEMEAT's role is specified in Section 4.2 of Schedule 4 of the Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (Red Meat MOU):**

- A** work with the objective of establishing world best practice in ensuring the safety of red meat and pork products.
- B** ensure each meat industry sector implements sound management systems to ensure safe and hygienic product is delivered to the marketplace.
- C** ensure adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.
- D** ensure that effective crisis management strategies are put in place by the appropriate meat industry sectors and, to this end, ensure that there is a fully integrated and effective communications network.
- E** monitor industry meat safety performance.

# SAFEMEAT Structure

## SAFEMEAT Partners

SAFEMEAT Partners provides overarching strategic policy direction for SAFEMEAT's activities within the meat and livestock sector. Partners is also the decision-making body within the SAFEMEAT governance structure.

SAFEMEAT Partners met on the following dates during 2019-20:

- 3 December 2019
- 25 June 2020

A list of SAFEMEAT Partners member organisations and representatives in 2019-20 is at *Appendix A*.

## SAFEMEAT Advisory Group

SAFEMEAT Partners is supported by the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group. The Advisory Group met on the following dates during 2019-20:

- 22 October 2019
- 20 February 2020
- 13 May 2020

The Advisory Group was established by Partners to provide a consultative platform for industry and government stakeholders to develop unified policy for the Australian red meat, pork and livestock industry integrity systems. The Advisory Group form recommendations and advice for SAFEMEAT Partners' decision. A list of SAFEMEAT Advisory Group member organisations and representatives in 2019-20 is at *Appendix B*.

Over the past year SAFEMEAT has continued to draw expertise and guidance from its traceability and issue-specific sub-committees. To increase efficiency and to promote greater alignment with SAFEMEAT Advisory Group objectives, groups reporting to the Advisory Group shared the same Chair.

Membership of the two long-term traceability groups is set out as follows:

## The Jurisdictional Traceability Group

The Jurisdictional Traceability Group (JTG) supports the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and provides a consultative platform for government stakeholders to give advice on government policy and regulatory matters, and for promoting nationally consistent legislation, standards and interpretation of integrity system rules.

### *Chair*

Andrew Henderson

### *Membership*

- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Agriculture Victoria
- Primary Industries and Regions, SA
- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, WA
- Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries, NT
- Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- Integrity Systems Company

## The Sheep Traceability Working Group

The SAFEMEAT Sheep Traceability Working Group (STWG) provides advice about the operations of, and improvements to, the National Livestock Identification System for Sheep and Goats (NLIS S&G) arising from the SheepCatcher tracing exercises. The STWG implements SAFEMEAT Partners' responses to the recommendations in the *SheepCatcher II report*.

### *Chair*

Andrew Henderson

### *Membership*

- Animal Health Committee (representing jurisdictions)
- State NLIS coordinator
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents
- Australian Meat Industry Council
- Integrity Systems Company
- Sheep Producers Australia
- WoolProducers Australia
- **Secretariat:** Sheep Producers Australia

### *The following issue-specific sub-committees met in 2019-20:*

- Hormone Growth Promotant Working Group (Chaired by Andrew Henderson)
- NLIS Statuses Working Group (Chaired by Andrew Henderson)
- Incident Response Manual Working Group (formerly Rodenticide Working Group, Chaired by Andrew Henderson)



# SAFEMEAT Secretariat

SAFEMEAT has a full-time contracted secretariat based on competitive tender.

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat is currently provided by, and located in, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

The Secretariat provides support to the Chairs and is responsible for ensuring the timely and effective operations of SAFEMEAT through the delivery of secretariat services including SAFEMEAT's administrative arrangements, meetings and teleconferences, development of papers, minutes, correspondence and key SAFEMEAT documents.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture**



# SAFEMEAT Funding

Individual SAFEMEAT members covered their own costs to attend meetings and undertake projects.

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat was jointly funded by the Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), through its wholly owned subsidiary, the Integrity Systems Company (ISC).

The cost of running the Secretariat was \$262,996 (GST Inclusive) for the 2019-20 financial year.





# Significant actions in 2019-20

SAFEMEAT made significant progress on streamlining and strengthening the integrity system via its committees and sub-committees in 2019-20. The key activities are outlined below.

## Reform recommendations for Australia's livestock traceability system

At the request of the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC), SAFEMEAT has spent the past 18 months working with its stakeholders to develop a range of reform recommendations to enhance the existing national livestock traceability system. The work culminated in our report '*Reform recommendations for Australia's livestock traceability system*', presented to the NBC on 11 March 2020.

The Report identifies options and pathways to address issues within industry and the system as it currently stands, and presents five reform recommendations that seek to deliver enhanced biosecurity and traceability outcomes for livestock industries, jurisdictions, and the Commonwealth government.

SAFEMEAT has assembled a sound evidentiary basis for this reform through the Commonwealth's legislative analysis, which identified inconsistencies and areas for alignment across jurisdictions' legislative frameworks, and the Animal Health Committee cross-species analysis, which compared traceability requirements across all commercially farmed cloven-hooved livestock species.

SAFEMEAT considered the gap analyses and formed recommendations at meetings and out of session throughout 2019. SAFEMEAT's peak industry council members were asked to consult with their respective membership bases on four of the recommendations contained in the report, with a view to establishing an understanding of the level of acceptance of these recommendations among their membership. These recommendations, along with supporting material were distributed by peak industry councils at their discretion, with peak industry councils providing feedback and ultimately their position on each recommendation through SAFEMEAT. The final version of the report was distributed to SAFEMEAT members to share with those stakeholders in March 2020<sup>1</sup>.

SAFEMEAT made an additional recommendation outside the report that NBC provide the necessary resources to commission and undertake scoping work on available options for implementing the intent of SAFEMEAT's recommendations prior to conducting a full Regulatory Impact Statement. NBC have agreed<sup>2</sup> to form a jurisdictional working group to progress this work. It is SAFEMEAT's understanding that this work will include consultation with key stakeholders to address concerns raised, identify feasible implementation options, and assess ongoing financial resources associated with each of the options as appropriate. It will also incorporate and consider existing supportive material, such as the EID Evaluation Report and CIE Report commissioned by the STWG. The scoping work was originally proposed to be completed before the end of 2020 however due to COVID-19 this timeline may be revised<sup>3</sup>.

Work to date has generated significant goodwill across the supply chain and demonstrates SAFEMEAT's value in providing a platform for engagement and

collaboration between industry and government. SAFEMEAT will continue to engage with its stakeholders to support the progression of this work.

## SAFEMEAT Electronic Identification Evaluation

In December 2018 Sheep Producers Australia (SPA) requested that the SAFEMEAT JTG develop a methodology to evaluate the Victorian eID traceability system at its current stage of rollout against the visual mob-based system. The request was accepted and the JTG subsequently delivered an evaluation methodology to SPA on 7 November 2019 and made arrangements to conduct an evaluation exercise implementing the methodology (the Evaluation) in March 2020. Updates on both the methodology and the Evaluation were provided to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and Partners on 13 May and 25 June 2020 respectively.

The Evaluation was conducted by staff from New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Biosecurity Queensland, with co-operation from Agriculture Victoria. It assessed the performance of both systems (electronic tags and visual tags) for sheep and goats currently operating in Victoria in line with the National Livestock Traceability Performance Standards (NLTPS) Standard 1.1, which requires a level of 98 per cent for short term tracing. The results of the Evaluation were then reviewed and scrutinised by staff from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in Western Australia.

The JTG will compile the results in a scientific based report '*NLIS (Sheep & Goats) Traceability Evaluation: A comparison and evaluation of traceability of electronic and visual identification in NLIS (Sheep & Goats) in a segment of the supply chain.*', for SPA and SAFEMEAT's consideration early in 2020-21<sup>4</sup>. Results of the Evaluation so far indicate that electronically identified sheep can be traced with greater efficiency and accuracy than visually identified sheep.

## SAFEMEAT Sheep Traceability Working Group – CIE Report

In 2019 the STWG engaged the CIE to update the 2010 NLIS Sheep & Goat Business Plan, fulfilling key recommendations from the SheepCatcher II report and the 2014 Decision Regulatory Impact Statement (DRIS): *Implementation of improvements to the National Livestock Identification System for sheep and goats.*

The project was initiated to address recommendation four of the DRIS, '*that the costs and benefits of transitioning from a mob-based system to an EID system be reviewed within five years.* CIE examined the costs and benefits for three options for identification of sheep and goats; (i) the mob-based NLIS sheep and goat system retaining the current exemptions (rangeland and dairy goats), (ii) Individual EID without exemptions for all sheep and goats, and (iii) Individual EID with current exemptions (rangeland and dairy goats).

1 The Report contains information of a sensitive nature and as such, has not been released beyond the stakeholders of peak industry council members who were consulted during the review process, and government agricultural ministers. Stakeholders viewing the report should be aware that it constitutes recommendations only and is not an agreed final implementation strategy.

2 NBC have formed the National Livestock Traceability Enhancement working group. Pending agreement from the NBC, the working group's focus will be to progress opportunities for enhancement of Australia's livestock traceability system including those recommended by SAFEMEAT.

3 The NBC National Livestock Traceability Enhancement working group is intending to provide a progress report to agriculture ministers once the work program is finalised in 2021.

4 The report was reviewed and endorsed by the JTG before being presented out of session to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and SPA in August 2020. The report was discussed by SAFEMEAT Advisory Group in session on 7 October 2020 and subsequently endorsed by SAFEMEAT Partners on 2 December 2020.



## Significant actions in 2019-20 (continued)

CIE delivered the final report, *Improving traceability for sheep and goats – Update of the 2010 NLIS (sheep and goats) Business Plan* to the STWG in 2020. The STWG is preparing a response to this report for the consideration of SAFEMEAT and SPA to provide context for the Report and a formal response to the key findings and recommendations. Overall, the STWG considers that there is sufficient evidence presented in the report to support its key findings and recommendations. The report and STWG response will be provided to SAFEMEAT for consideration in 2020-21<sup>5</sup>.

### Implementation of changes to the National Vendor Declaration (NVD)

During 2019-20, SAFEMEAT, in conjunction with the Integrity Systems Company, progressed several NVD change requests in line with SAFEMEAT's annual NVD change process. Endorsed changes included:

- Inclusion of Destination PIC on all NVDs; Inclusion ensures alignment with state requirements, specifically for use in WA and TAS.
- Removal of Part C (Agent's Declaration) from all NVDs; This field is not used by all agents and is not legislated by any jurisdiction. The removal increases space on the NVD for other fields.
- Rewording of Questions A and B in the NVD in the Description area of Part A of the Sheep & Lamb NVD; Confusion regarding these questions has been ongoing and the rewording will give greater clarity as to what a producer needs to answer to satisfy the requirements underpinned by state legislation.

The inclusion of time off feed and time off water as fields across all NVDs was discussed at the Advisory Group meeting on 22 October 2019, but agreement to move forward with including these fields as a part of the next version of the NVD was unable to be reached.

SAFEMEAT was also made aware of a wording change to the declaration section of the European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme NVD to include additional information specific to the freedom from Oestradiol and its ester-like derivatives.

### Cowcatcher III

SAFEMEAT considered and endorsed the final Cowcatcher III Report in late 2019. The key findings of the exercise undertaken in June 2018 are outlined in the report and align with the overall findings of SAFEMEAT's work on traceability, and SAFEMEAT agreed that the recommendations associated with the report should be fed into the broader traceability review and reform process that is currently underway. The Cowcatcher III Report will not be released to stakeholders outside of SAFEMEAT.

### HGP Communication Materials

The SAFEMEAT HGP Working Group finalised a package of HGP communication materials in June 2020. The HGP fact sheet, flyer and poster aim to raise awareness and understanding amongst producers of the correct use of HGPs to maintain and strengthen HGP compliance.

Both print and web versions of the communications materials are available to peak industry councils, state departments of agriculture/relevant food safety authorities and state farming organisations and can be accessed via SAFEMEAT's website.

### Incident Response Manual

Following an investigation into a residue incident in an Australian livestock sector, SAFEMEAT commissioned a review of the operations of the Working Group established to manage the incident. The Review Report made several recommendations in support of reviewing the SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual (IRM). SAFEMEAT engaged a consultant to review and revise the IRM in line with the recommendations in October 2019.

The revised IRM now takes into consideration contemporary emergency management frameworks and the broader regulatory and policy environment that the incident response manual operates within, including interactions and effects on industry body crisis response plans, government regulations, and SAFEMEAT member/stakeholder policies.

A final revised version of the IRM will be presented to SAFEMEAT early in 2020-21 for endorsement<sup>6</sup>, noting that the document is intended to be a living document and continuously monitored and revised as necessary.

### SAFEMEAT website

Over 2019-20, SAFEMEAT worked with Integrity Systems Company to develop a new SAFEMEAT website. The new design presents a more modern, user friendly platform is easier for SAFEMEAT members and stakeholders to navigate.

Existing SAFEMEAT website content was reviewed and updated by the SAFEMEAT Secretariat and a small Communications Working Group consisting of Advisory Group members, with new content created as necessary. Additionally, the website now includes more links to information on other organisations' websites, ensuring website users are accessing the most up to date information from the correct organisations. The website will continue to undergo development updates, with the intention to include a member's portal for SAFEMEAT members to access documents relating to meetings, and translation into other languages. The new website is hosted on Meat and Livestock Australia's servers and will be managed through Integrity Systems Company's web development supplier.

The new website was launched in June 2020.

<sup>5</sup> The final CIE Report and STWG Response to the Report were presented to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group on 7 October 2020 and SAFEMEAT Partners on 2 December 2020.

<sup>6</sup> The revised IRM was presented to SAFEMEAT Advisory Group on 7 October 2020 and to SAFEMEAT Partners on 2 December 2020. Additional feedback was provided out of session to be incorporated into the next iteration of the IRM.



# SAFEMEAT Business Plan

The strategic direction of SAFEMEAT is set out in its Business Plan. It outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia and seeks to achieve this through targeted projects under the following key programs of industry priority:

- 1 Standards and Regulations
- 2 Emergency Management
- 3 Animal Diseases
- 4 Residues
- 5 Pathogens
- 6 Systems Development and Management
- 7 Communications and Education
- 8 Emerging Issues
- 9 SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review



### **Under each key program there are defined projects with milestones, funding arrangements and responsibilities:**

#### **1. Standards and Regulations**

This program contributes to the implementation of nationally consistent standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

SAFEMEAT supports the development and adoption of harmonised and scientifically-based national and international standards and promotes reduced regulation in the sector whilst maintaining the necessary requirements to produce safe food, ensure consumer protection, and prevent market disruption.

#### **2. Emergency Management**

SAFEMEAT's work under this program ensures that effective emergency management strategies are in place and activated at appropriate times to protect animal and human health and to minimise market disruption from food safety and related emergencies. SAFEMEAT is working towards enhancing the capability of the red meat, pork and dairy industry sectors to deal with food safety and related emergencies.

#### **3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)**

The Animal Diseases program enables the red meat, pork and livestock industry to deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs while minimising market disruption and promoting domestic consumer confidence in meat products. SAFEMEAT contributes, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of national policies and programs designed to protect Australia from exotic animal diseases.

#### **4. Residues**

Under this program, SAFEMEAT develops and implements sound management strategies and systems to deliver safe and hygienic food with adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to residues.

SAFEMEAT actively promotes the observance of withholding periods (WHPs) and export slaughter intervals (ESIs) in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding maximum residue limit for all markets. It considers cost-efficient and equitable funding implications to minimise market disruption arising from residue violations. SAFEMEAT aims to reduce the overall number of incidents related to chemical residue violations.

#### **5. Pathogens**

The Pathogens program implements sound management systems for the red meat sector to deliver safe and hygienic food that meets consumer and regulatory requirements. This involves the development of pathogen and microbiological quality management programs with an emphasis on managing risk to maintain confidence in the microbiological safety of red meat products.

#### **6. Systems Development and Management**

This program enables SAFEMEAT to facilitate the development of key management systems to underpin red meat and pork safety and hygiene programs in order to provide a through-chain, 'world best practice' approach for managing food safety risks in the red meat, pork and livestock industry. SAFEMEAT aims to position the industry at the forefront of meeting domestic and overseas requirements for meat.

#### **7. Communication and Education**

Through this program, SAFEMEAT facilitates communication, education and awareness of meat safety and hygiene issues to the red meat, pork and livestock industry, the broader community, and international markets. By establishing a fully integrated and effective communication network, SAFEMEAT aims to encourage ongoing development of expertise on meat safety and hygiene within the industry, government and academia and promote greater awareness of food safety and hygiene within the broader community.

#### **8. Emerging Issues**

The Emerging Issues program enables SAFEMEAT to monitor and implement a range of strategic initiatives about emerging issues to ensure that the industry is best positioned to meet changing market and consumer demands.

#### **9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review and governance improvements**

This program aims to deliver more robust industry assurance programs that incentivise participation and uptake, promote more efficient delivery, and encourage continual improvement.

The delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies will ensure Australia's systems continue to be recognised as world best practice, underpinning the sustainability and prosperity of the red meat, pork and livestock industry into the future.

### **New approach to Business Plan being developed**

SAFEMEAT agreed to develop a new Business Plan on completion of the SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference Review. The recommendations from the review were finalised in June 2019, and SAFEMEAT Partners were presented with revised SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference for endorsement in June 2020.

The new Business Plan will now be developed in line with the recommendations and revised Terms of Reference and will be presented to SAFEMEAT in 2021.

The new Business Plan will focus on delivery of key SAFEMEAT outcomes and consolidate SAFEMEAT activity into fewer program areas with timeframes and key performance indicators.



# Progress against the **Business Plan**

In the 2019-20 period SAFEMEAT made the following progress against the current nine key programs in the Business Plan:

## **1. Standards and Regulations**

SAFEMEAT continues to work with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and contributes to assessments on national agricultural and veterinary chemical registration issues, particularly where ESIs and WHPs need to meet sensitive export market requirements.

SAFEMEAT's work with the NBC on developing reform recommendations to enhance the existing national livestock traceability system aims to promote and facilitate a harmonised approach to traceability legislation.

## **2. Emergency Management**

SAFEMEAT was not required to initiate any emergency management arrangements under the SAFEMEAT IRM in 2019-20.

The SAFEMEAT IRM is currently undergoing revision and will be presented to SAFEMEAT in 2020-21. The revised IRM will address several issues, including:

- whether the early-stage process to respond to an event that could potentially damage livestock industries and export markets is adequate;
- whether the governance, working arrangements and communications channels during an incident, particularly for a multi-species response, are accurately reflected in the IRM; and
- how the SAFEMEAT IRM interacts with the various Incident Management Plans across the sector such as PorkSAFE, ALFA and RMAC Plans, and AUSVETPLAN.

The revised IRM takes into consideration contemporary emergency management frameworks and the broader regulatory and policy environment that the incident response manual operates within, including interactions and effects on industry body crisis response plans, government regulations, and SAFEMEAT member/stakeholder policies.

SAFEMEAT needs to remain vigilant, focussed and committed to ensure we stay abreast of current and emerging issues; the revised manual will ensure SAFEMEAT can activate its emergency response system efficiently and effectively.

## **3. Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)**

SAFEMEAT, through its representative bodies and associated technical committees, continued to actively promote Australia's food safety measures to maintain market confidence in the safety of Australian livestock products.

SAFEMEAT kept a watching brief, and provided advice as appropriate, on international and domestic developments regarding zoonotic diseases that have the potential to impact on Australia's red meat, pork and livestock industry.

## **4. Residues**

Since its establishment in 1998, SAFEMEAT has had a key role in:

- identifying potential residue problems and developing appropriate strategies to deal with them, which are cost efficient and equitably funded;
- minimising market disruption arising from residue incidents; and
- actively promoting the observance of WHPs and ESIs to prevent residues being present above the corresponding maximum residue limits (MRL) requirements in export markets.

SAFEMEAT also assists in progressing residue monitoring activities through the:

- National Organochlorine Residue Management Program (NORM) program;
- National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation (NARM) program;
- Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (TART) program;
- Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (START) program; and
- Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (PTART) program.
- Cotton Trash Working Group
- NLIS Statuses Working Group
- HGP Working Group

The management of residue risks is partly controlled through the assignment of statuses for individual animals or for 'at risk' properties. Meat processors are expected to take action where these statuses are flagged. SAFEMEAT continued to work with all jurisdictions in 2019-20 to ensure these statuses are managed consistently across the nation.





## Progress against the **Business Plan** (continued)

### 5. Pathogens

The work under this key program continued to be supported by MLA's research and development (R&D) program. R&D projects are conducted by MLA in the areas of chemical usage, microbiological food safety, and post-mortem inspection.

MLA is involved in several consultations and activities to present and develop the industry's position on control of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Surveillance of resistance, surveillance of usage and development of prescribing guidelines is all being supported in current projects. This work aligns with the *National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy* released in March 2020. Several animal industry organisations (representative as well as Research and Development Corporations) have commenced the implementation of a joint Antimicrobial Stewardship Research, Development and Extension strategy. The publication of a list of antimicrobials forbidden from use in animals is expected to be published by the European Commission or agencies around October 2020.

SAFEMEAT receives regular reporting and updates from MLA and continues to maintain a watching brief on AMR.

### 6. Systems Development and Management

There were several systems developments during 2019-20:

- The Early Warning (EW) enhancements were successfully rolled out in January 2020, following the commencement of communications in early November 2019. Some issues have been experienced in the field in relation to the treatment of the EW status in saleyards, which has led to some potential buyer avoidance. This is improving with the support of industry and government to ensure that EW is well understood in the marketplace.
- A solution to remove the Cotton Trash status from devices (manually) on the NLIS database was developed to assist in operational management, along with the development of a Cotton Trash Warning status for advanced warning of properties that have livestock residing on them that may have accessed cotton trash.
- The final draft of the refreshed NLIS Device Standards has been progressed through a working group including industry and government participants. It is currently undergoing the final stages of consultation and will be presented to SAFEMEAT for approval out of session in 2020-21.
- A new user interface design for eNVDs was released in late March 2020. The enhanced eNVD product supports all features that are currently in place in the eDEC system. The eDec will be decommissioned from July 2020.
- A project to develop a central dashboard for the jurisdictions to conduct compliance monitoring at a state and national level, and to implement consistent livestock traceability reports to underpin national tracing exercises is progressing.
- A desktop audit process was developed for the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program, to enable producers to submit records and evidence electronically to assist in maintaining a consistent level of assessment of producers during the COVID-19 restrictions.

Integrity Systems Company is progressing a comprehensive review of the NLIS Terms of Use (TOU), with the objective of:

- aligning the TOU with the current SAFEMEAT governance arrangements,
- modernising the TOU in line with future direction of the integrity system, and
- ensuring a best practice approach to database access and management.

### 7. Communication and Education

In 2019-20, SAFEMEAT continued to:

- meet face-to-face and virtually to address all matters related to its role.
- hold teleconferences as circumstances determine (these were particularly relevant for the working groups progressing agreed activities).
- keep AGSOC and AGMIN informed of significant developments particularly in relation to the traceability reform work.
- produce educational material as needed including HGP communication material.
- maintain linkages to other committees by providing them with updates on the progress of the work outlined in the Business Plan.
- provide presentations on SAFEMEAT roles and responsibilities.
- respond to media enquiries as they arose.

SAFEMEAT launched a new website in June 2020. The new website will help to promote the SAFEMEAT Partnership and its work to the Australian meat industry's international and domestic markets, shore up stakeholder confidence in the quality and integrity of Australian meat, and help enhance understanding of how Australia's meat safety system works and who is involved.

### 8. Emerging Issues

In 2019-20, SAFEMEAT maintained a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues and participated in forums to discuss matters of concern.

SAFEMEAT continued to receive briefings as required on current and emerging market access issues for Australian exports by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. These briefings allow SAFEMEAT to communicate about specific issues to relevant industry stakeholders and coordinate an industry-wide response.

### 9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review

Since endorsing the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review report '*Towards an integrated integrity system*' in November 2015, SAFEMEAT has made significant progress on implementing the subsequent recommendations. Ongoing activities being undertaken by SAFEMEAT in 2019-20 include:

- the development of an integrated electronic National Vendor Declaration (eNVD) system.
- implementation of governance recommendations relating to the operations of SAFEMEAT's committees.

# Appendix A

## SAFEMEAT Partners member organisations and representatives in 2019-20

### Independent Chair

Ross Keane

### Industry Members

#### Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd

David Inall  
Craig Hough

#### Australian Livestock Exporters' Council

Mark Harvey-Sutton  
Alastair James

#### Australian Lot Feeders' Association

Bryce Camm  
Christian Mulders

#### Australian Meat Industry Council

Noel Kelson  
Patrick Hutchison  
Dr Mary Wu

#### Australian Pork Limited

Margot Andre

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Tony Hegarty  
John McGoverne

#### Goat Industry Council of Australia

John Falkenhagen

#### Sheep Producers Australia

Ian McColl  
Bonnie Skinner

### Regulator members

#### Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Fran Freeman  
Anna Somerville

#### Jurisdictional Agriculture Authority Representative

Dr Allison Crook (Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)

#### Jurisdictional Meat Industry Authority Representative

Peter Day (State Food Authority)

### Observers

#### Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association

Peter Baldwin

#### Australian Livestock Markets Association

Ken Rogers

#### Animal Health Australia

Kathleen Plowman

#### Dairy Australia

Susannah Tymms

#### Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd

Jason Strong

#### Integrity Systems Company

Dr Jane Weatherley  
Jo Quigley

#### LiveCorp

No representatives attended 2019-20

#### Australian Meat Processor Corporation

Veneta Chapple

#### Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Dr Maggie Hardy

### Guests

#### Chair SAFEMEAT Advisory Group

Andrew Henderson

#### Cattle Council of Australia (Chair of Cotton Trash Working Group)

Bob Barwell

#### Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

Jo Laduzko  
Kat Waterhouse  
Laura McGrath

#### Secretariat

Usha Sriram-Prasad  
Tara McDonough



# Appendix B

## SAFEMEAT Advisory Group member organisations and representatives in 2018-19

### Independent Chair

Andrew Henderson

### Industry Members

#### Australian Dairy Farmers

Craig Hough

#### Australian Livestock Exporters Council

Alastair James

#### Australian Livestock Markets Association

Kate McGilvray

#### Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association

Peter Baldwin

#### Australian Lot Feeders' Association

Christian Mulders

#### Australian Meat Industry Council

Claire House  
Mary Wu

#### Australian Pork Limited

Margot Andre  
Alister Oulton

#### Australian Renderers' Association

Dennis King

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Peter Hall  
John McGoverne

#### Goat Industry Council of Australia

John Falkenhagen

#### Sheep Producers Australia

Bill O'Halloran  
Bonnie Skinner

### Regulator Members

#### Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Anna Somerville  
Dugald MacLachlan

#### Jurisdictional Meat Industry Authority Representative

Brendan Tatham (PrimeSafe Victoria)

#### NSW Department of Primary Industries

David Cusack  
Lisa Burrows

#### QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Michael (Bomber) Lancaster

#### Agriculture Victoria

Ben Fahy

#### Primary Industries and Regions SA

Petra Lennon  
Denice Rendell

#### Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)

Stuart Chilcott

#### Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development WA

Beth Green

#### Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade NT

Greg Crawford

### Observers

#### Chair of SAFEMEAT Partners

Ross Keane

#### Animal Health Australia

Simon Humphrys  
Robert Barwell

#### Australian Meat Processor Corporation

Veneta Chapple

#### Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Steven Harris  
Maggie Hardy  
Felicity Foster

#### Dairy Australia

Louise Sundermann

#### Integrity Systems Company

Dr Jane Weatherley  
Jo Quigley  
Damon Holmes

#### LiveCorp

No representatives attended 2019-20

#### Meat & Livestock Australia

Dr Ian Jenson

#### National Residue Survey

Clare Jones

#### Wool Producers Australia

Jo Hall  
Ash Cooper

#### Stock Feed Manufacturers Council of Australia

Duncan Rowland

#### Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia

Dennis King

### Guests

#### Cattle Council of Australia

Bob Barwell (Chair of Cotton Trash Working Group)

#### Department of Agriculture

Jo Laduzko  
Kat Waterhouse  
Laura McGrath

#### Secretariat

Usha Sriram-Prasad  
Tara McDonough

### Annual Report Acronyms

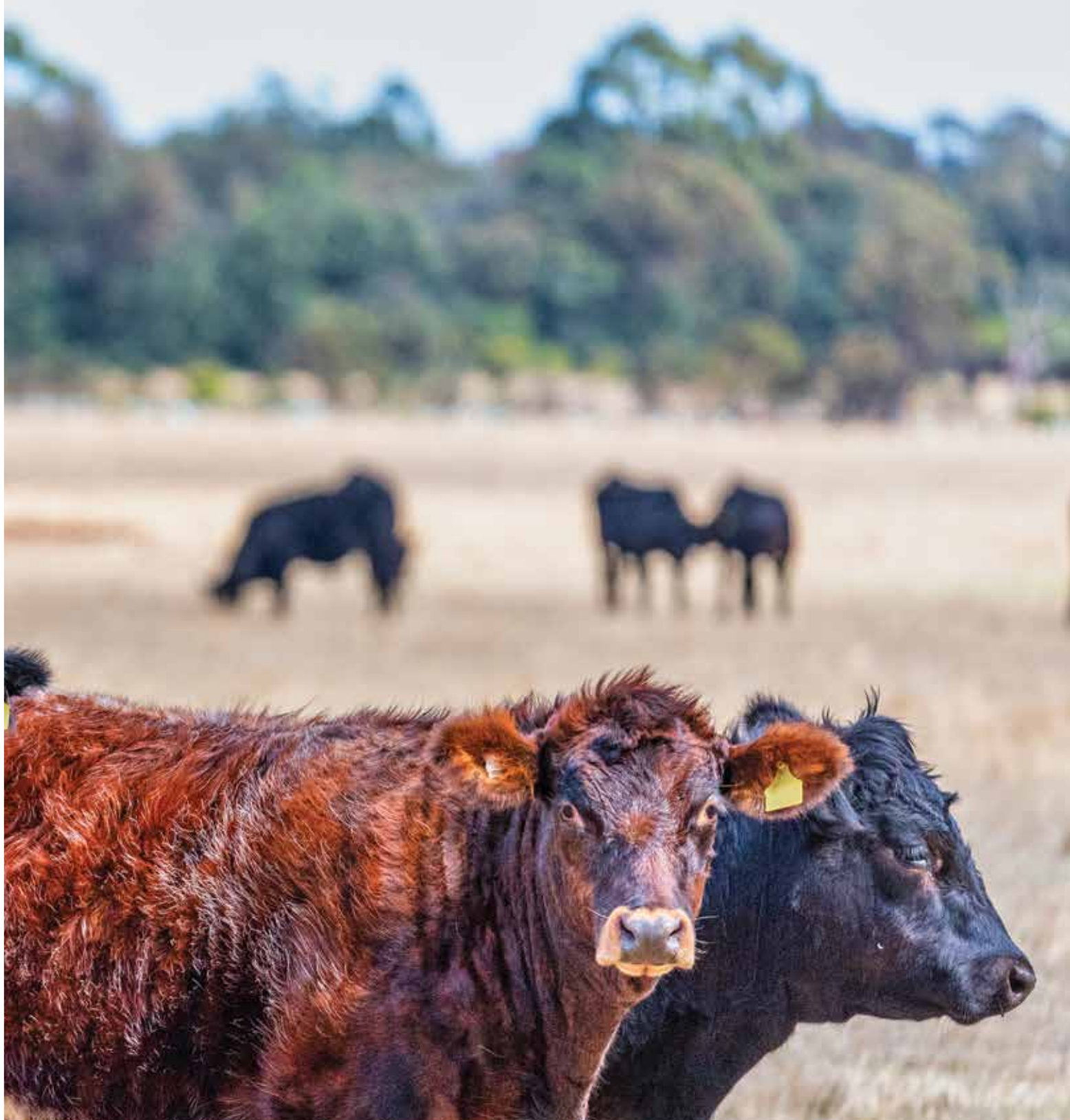
<b>AGMIN</b>	Agriculture Ministers' Forum
<b>AGSOC</b>	Agriculture Senior Officials' Committee
<b>AHA</b>	Animal Health Australia
<b>AMPC</b>	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
<b>APIQ<sup>✓</sup>®</b>	Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance
<b>APL</b>	Australian Pork Limited
<b>APVMA</b>	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
<b>CVD</b>	Commodity Vendor Declaration
<b>CVO</b>	Chief Veterinary Officer
<b>DoA</b>	Department of Agriculture
<b>eNVD</b>	electronic National Vendor Declaration
<b>ESI</b>	Export Slaughter Interval
<b>EW1</b>	Early Warning 1 (status)
<b>HACCP</b>	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
<b>HGP</b>	Hormonal Growth Promotant
<b>ISC</b>	Integrity Systems Company
<b>JTG</b>	Jurisdictional Traceability Group
<b>LPA</b>	Livestock Production Assurance
<b>MISP</b>	Meat Industry Strategic Plan
<b>MLA</b>	Meat and Livestock Australia
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MRL</b>	Maximum Residue Limit
<b>NARM</b>	National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation Program
<b>NBC</b>	National Biosecurity Committee
<b>NFAS</b>	National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme
<b>NLIS</b>	National Livestock Identification System
<b>NORM</b>	National Organochlorine Residue Management Program
<b>NSQA</b>	National Saleyards Quality Assurance
<b>NVD</b>	National Vendor Declaration
<b>PIC</b>	Property Identification Code
<b>PTART</b>	Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>START</b>	Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>STWG</b>	Sheep Traceability Working Group
<b>TART</b>	Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
<b>WHP</b>	Withholding period











**safe** *meat*

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